

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1 and 5-6 without prejudice or disclaimer, amend claim 2 as follows:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Currently Amended) [[The]] A disk array apparatus according to claim 1, comprising:
a plurality of disk boxes each generally taking the shape of a rectangular solid,
and each having an air intake plane through which air flows in and an exhaust plane
provided at an end opposite to that of the air intake plane, a plurality of disk drives
being aligned and installed in each of the disk boxes;
a rack generally taking the shape of a rectangular solid, disk units being
accommodated in said rack so as to form a plurality of stages in a vertical direction,
each of the disk units being formed by putting two of the disk boxes back to back with
a gap therebetween in a horizontal direction with the exhaust planes respectively of the
two disk boxes being opposed to each other, ventilation being created to flow through
planes of said rack respectively perpendicular to the air intake planes of the disk boxes
and then through a top plane of said rack, a draft path having a width generally
equivalent to a lateral width of said rack and extending in the vertical direction being
formed by the gaps of the disk units accommodated in said rack; and
an exhaust device disposed at an upper part of said rack, air within said rack
being sucked in from the air intake planes of the disk boxes by said exhaust device so
as to pass through the exhaust planes of the disk boxes and the draft path, and being
exhausted through the top plane of said rack to outside by said exhaust device,
wherein said exhaust device is disposed with a substantially entire surface of an
air intake port of said exhaust device facing a cross-section of the draft path,
the disk drives are installed in each of the disk boxes in a multi-stage form,
a flow straightening plate is disposed behind the exhaust planes of the disk
boxes, the flow straightening plate has a plurality of vent holes to adjust a flow rate of

the air sucked in by said exhaust devices, and

when the flow straightening plate is virtually divided into a plurality of divisional portions so as to correspond to the stages of disk drives, a total area of the vent holes in a divisional portion located near said exhaust device is smaller than a total area of the vent holes in a divisional portion located far from said exhaust device.

3. (Original) The disk array apparatus according to claim 2, wherein, in each of the divisional portions, a total area of the vent holes in a position located nearer said exhaust device is smaller than a total area of the vent holes in a position located farther from said exhaust device.
4. (Withdrawn) The disk array apparatus according to claim 2, wherein
 - a circuit board having connectors to electrically connect the disk drives is disposed between the exhaust planes of the disk boxes and the flow straightening plate, and
 - the vent holes in the flow straightening plate are disposed so as to be separated from the projected contour of each of the connectors.
- 5-6. (Cancelled)
7. (Previously Presented) The disk array apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said vent holes generally takes a shape of a circle.
8. (Withdrawn) The disk array apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said vent holes generally takes a shape of a rectangle.
9. (Withdrawn) The disk array apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a contour defined by said vent holes generally takes a shape of a rectangle.

10. (Withdrawn) The disk array apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said vent holes generally takes a shape of a trapezoid or a triangle.